

## EVENTS OF THE WEEK OVERSEAS

## Moore Accepts Seat on International Bench

THE most important thing which the council and assembly of the league of nations have accomplished during the past week is the election of the judges of the international court of justice. The election was carried out much more rapidly than had been anticipated, and in the case of the eleven judges who are full members of the court, the council and assembly were in agreement. They failed to agree, however, on the four jurists who are to serve as deputy judges, and it was necessary for the president of the assembly to appoint a mixed commission to effect a compromise.

Among those elected was John Bassett Moore, of the United States, who has been prominently identified with international affairs for many years and who has been for a long time professor of international law and diplomacy at Columbia University. The other ten judges are from the following nations: Great Britain, France, Italy, Spain, Brazil, Cuba, Switzerland, Holland, Denmark and Japan. While the election was obviously on a political basis, an effort was made to have as many countries and as many legal traditions as possible represented on the court. The international court has been established under the league, but the nations who may appeal to it are not restricted to those who have ratified the league covenant.

The attitude of the United States toward the international court has not been made known, but, in view of the fact that Mr. Elihu Root had an important part in the working out of the constitution of the court, there have been many rumors that the present administration would not regard the recognition of this court as being in the same category as membership in the league. And it has been frequently stated that President Harding intended to found his "association of nations" on the basis of this or a similar court of arbitration.

Previous to the election of the judges of the international court a number of speeches were made in the assembly by prominent members defending the league for having made no progress on the question of mandates and disarmament. Lord Robert Cecil, representing South Africa, charged that the delay was not the fault of the council but was due to the attitude of the United States. He stated that on February 23 the American government protested against the definition of mandates without being consulted. On March 1 the United States was invited by the council to discuss with it the terms of the mandates, but never replied to this invitation. Mr. Arthur Balfour, who represents Great Britain both on the council and in the assembly, declared that the league had been unable to take any effective steps on the question of the reduction of armaments while certain of the great nations refused to co-operate with the league or to be bound by any of its decisions on this subject. M. Leon Bourgeois, the head of the French delegation, declared that the league would go on with its work even if the United States did continue its present attitude. The Washington conference, he believed, would in no way conflict with the league, but on the contrary would work for the same ends.

## Soviet Economic Policy.

THE motto of the new economic policy adopted by the Soviet government is: "Communism means the increase of production for the general benefit combined with the prevention of exploitation for general protection." The primary purpose of this description of the new policy is to allay the fear of theoretical Communists that Lenin had thrown over the principles for which the revolution was fought for an ill-disguised kind of capitalism. In explaining the attitude of the Soviet government toward foreign capitalists in Russia, Krassin, the minister of trade, laid down four guiding principles.

In the first place, the Soviet government does not recognize the right of ownership in goods or factories in Russia. This applies to both foreigners and citizens. Those who formerly owned plants or mines are in the same position as other concessionaires, though some exceptions may be made in the case of concerns which have continued to operate during the revolution. Second, the Soviet government does not recognize any legal obligations of foreign debts, but it is willing to negotiate on a consolidation basis in a case like France. Third, foreigners operating in Russia will be permitted to import machinery and export produce and goods, but the whole matter of import and export remains in the hands of the government. Fourth, the concessions will be in the form of a lease on a royalty basis, to be paid in cash or in products.

Krassin declared that it was the purpose of the government to increase production and to encourage

trade within Russia and that profitable returns to foreign concessionaires would be permitted. The Soviet government, however, would retain control of imports and exports and take no chances in permitting Russia to become exploited for the benefit of foreigners.

## MAP SHOWS WIDE FAMINE AREAS



IN WEST AND NORTH RUSSIA there is not such desperation over the scarcity of food as in East and South Russia, where few provinces show crop yields of more than 18 per cent normal. The provinces of Saratov and Astrakhan harvested only 4 per cent, and this vast area has millions of starving souls. The map was compiled from special reports.

## Politics and the Mark.

THE recent sensational decline in the German mark taken in connection with the assassination of former Minister Erzberger, and the opposition of the reactionary Bavarian government to the central government of Berlin, is regarded in some of the political circles of Europe as an occasion for alarm for the stability of the republican government in Germany. The theory which is advanced is that there are certain powerful financial groups in Germany whose sympathies are with the monarchists, which are deliberately attempting to force down the mark until it has no value, thus driving the government into bankruptcy. This maneuver would, of course, make it impossible for the Wirth cabinet to meet its obligations to the allies, would permit the reactionaries to assume control of the government, bring considerable profit to the promoters of this scheme, and cause consternation and all sorts of difficulties for the allies.

In certain quarters in Germany the decline in the mark is being used as an argument of another sort. It is contended that in order to make her first billion gold marks payment Germany was obliged to make heavy purchases of foreign currencies which resulted in a very decided fall in the mark. Each successive payment necessitating the purchase of foreign exchange will serve to drive the mark further down, ultimately rendering it impossible for Germany to keep up her payments. It is believed that the allies and America are very anxious that this should not happen. In the case of America it would mean a great shrinkage in Germany's purchasing power, and in the case of the allies it would mean, of course, the suspension of reparation payments. Since no one wants this situation to develop, the Germans are making the suggestion that a reparation moratorium of a year or six months be declared in order to give them time to bring about a stabilization of the exchange.

The talk that Germany would be obliged to default her payments next spring or summer is not new. It is, in fact, one of the arguments used by Dr. Rathenau to convince the French of the advisability of accepting reparation in kind. It is not clear, however, just how far the monarchists and reactionaries are involved in hastening to bring about this condition to further their political plans. Chancellor Wirth and his cabinet in any circumstances are faced with a very difficult problem.

IF certain dispatches from Geneva are to be fully credited the long-standing dispute between Lithuania and Poland is on the verge of settlement. A few days ago it was stated in the Paris press that Lithuania had declined to accept the latest proposal put forward by the council of the league. This statement is now denied and it is said, on the contrary, that both the Lithuanian and Polish delegates at Geneva have been authorized by their governments to accept these proposals. Both delegations have made certain reservations, but just what these are has not been announced. The proposal of the league provides in general that Gen. Zeligowski withdraw from Vilna and a local police be established to preserve order. The city of Memel is to be under the control of Lithuania but may be used by the Poles as an outlet to the sea. Poland and Lithuania are to arrange a defensive military convention and Lithuania undertakes to negotiate no foreign treaty prejudicial to Poland.

Spanish troops in Morocco have begun a new offensive against the Moorish tribesmen by whom they were defeated not long ago. First reports of the operation indicate that the tribesmen are retiring in the face of a superior force without offering serious resistance.

Through the activities of the Wurttemberg and Baden police, who have been conducting an investigation in Bavaria, some twenty persons have been arrested in Munich charged with complicity in the plot to assassinate Herr Erzberger. A number of those arrested were members of the Ehrhardt Marine Brigade, which played an important part in the attempt of Von Kapp to overthrow the republican government. The fact that the reactionary Bavarian authorities, though not actually involved in the plot, have not made any particular efforts to uncover the conspiracy is likely to weaken the strength of the Bavarian opposition to the Berlin government.

The Rumanian government, according to a dispatch to the London Daily Herald, has agreed to permit Russian Soviet agents to make unrestricted purchases of Rumanian grain with the exception of wheat.

The Soviet government has refused to permit an investigation of conditions in Russia by the International Russian Relief Commission which was recently appointed by the supreme council. In his note to the allied governments George Tchitcherin, the Soviet foreign minister, declared that the appointment of M. Noulens, the former French ambassador at Petrograd and chairman of the committee of French creditors of Russia, as head of the international commission, was a "monstrous sneer at the fate of starving Russia."

## Conference Hopes Ill-Founded.

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aim at reconstruction in Russia as part of an indispensable and preliminary step.

"Until this first step is taken," he said, "all intercourse with Russia will be superficial and in consequence both the humanitarian efforts to relieve the famine-stricken people and the economic enterprises of wider scope will fail to achieve their ends."

This remarkable opinion of a man of the highest reputation who speaks from first-hand knowledge of Russian conditions today cannot be ignored or ascribed to Bolshevik tendencies. Gen. Thompson is a realist who is also an idealist, and he is convinced that although Russia's plight is desperate, so is that of other parts of Europe, and that by helping Russia we help ourselves.

Bolshevism will be killed quickest by letting in light and air and rescuing the Russians from their famine-haunted state. Be that as it may (and I do not dogmatize on knowing the danger and difficulty of this problem), it is certain, as I said in the beginning of this article, that the Washington conference will have no chance of great success if the French delegates and others are haunted by old fears and new bogeys, and if the European and Asiatic peoples are in turmoil of insurrection and conflict.

I write this as a warning note with the sound of breakers ahead, but I think that if these dangers were realized and not ignored by men rising about petty conflicts and national interest to the larger needs of humanity, the rocks of ruin may be avoided. There is a great gathering of popular opinion beating up which will reach out to Washington and give spiritual support to the delegates who face these things with courage and largeness of heart. But if they fail by smallness of character or timidity, there will be a heavy reckoning from the world's despair.

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